



Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement  
801 North First Street, Room 400  
San José, California 95110-1795

Hearing Date/Agenda Number:  
P.C. 5/20/02 Item:

File Number:  
GP02-03-02/GPT02-03-02

Council District and SNI Area:  
3 – N/A

Major Thoroughfares Map Number:  
66

Assessor's Parcel Number(s):  
230-29-082

Project Manager: Lesley Xavier

## GENERAL PLAN REPORT

### 2002 Spring Hearing

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

General Plan amendment request to change the Land Use/Transportation Diagram from Industrial Park (Rincon South Planned Community) to General Commercial in combination with Transit Corridor Residential (25-65 DU/AC) (Rincon South Planned Community) and an associated amendment to the General Plan text to reflect the proposed changes in the Rincon South Specific Plan.

**LOCATION:** Northeast corner of Technology Drive and Skyport Drive

**ACREAGE:** 4.9

#### APPLICANT/OWNER:

Sobrato Development/Sobrato Interests II

#### GENERAL PLAN LAND USE / TRANSPORTATION DIAGRAM DESIGNATION:

Existing Designation: Industrial Park (Rincon South Planned Community)

Proposed Designation: General Commercial in combination with Transit Corridor Residential (25-65 DU/AC) (Rincon South Planned Community)

**EXISTING ZONING DISTRICT(S):** IP (Industrial Park)

#### SURROUNDING LAND USES AND GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION(S):

North: Office building and parking garage – Industrial Park

South: Office building with ground floor commercial – Industrial Park

East: Office building – Industrial Park; General Commercial in combination with Industrial Park

West: Courtyard By Marriott Hotel – Industrial Park with Hotel overlay

#### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS:

A Mitigated Negative Declaration adopted on April 9, 2002.

#### PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

General Commercial in combination with Transit Corridor Residential (25-65 DU/AC) (Rincon South Planned Community)

Approved by:

Date:

#### PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

---

**CITY COUNCIL ACTION:**

---

**CITY DEPARTMENT AND PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED:**

- Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) – If housing is constructed on this site, PRNS would likely collect park fees, or if the project is over 50 dwelling units, staff may ask for offsite parkland dedication within the vicinity to assist with future development of other park sites designated in the Rincon South Specific Plan.
- Department of Transportation – The amendment request underwent a traffic analysis and it was determined that the estimated number of evening peak hour trips did not exceed the significant impact threshold of 1.5%. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from further traffic analysis and is projected to have an insignificant impact in the long term.

---

**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:**

- None received.

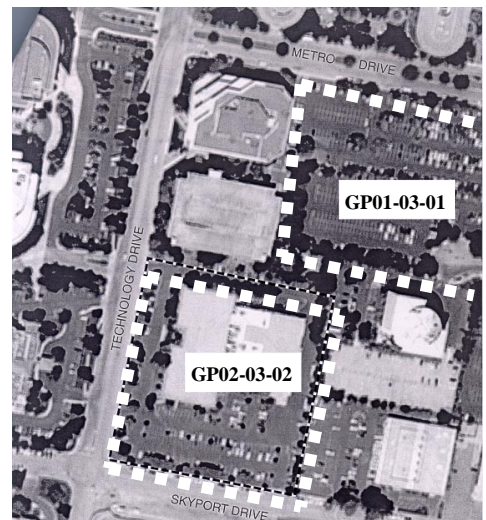
---

**ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:****PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This is a privately initiated General Plan amendment request to change the Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation from Industrial Park to General Commercial in combination with Transit Corridor Residential (25-65 DU/AC) for a 4.9-acre site located at the northeast corner of Technology Drive and Skyport Drive within the boundaries of the Rincon South Planned Residential Community. There is also an associated Text amendment to reflect the proposed changes in the Rincon South Specific Plan. The amendment site, at its current land use designation, would not allow for any residential development. The requested land use designation would allow for either wholly residential or commercial uses, or a mix of the two uses. Any residential development would be at a density of 25 to 65 dwelling units per acre. The commercial uses would include office, hotel, or appropriately scaled retail.

**BACKGROUND**

During the Fall 2001 General Plan Annual Review hearings, the City Council approved a land use change from Industrial Park to General Commercial in combination with Transit Corridor Residential (25-65 DU/AC) (File No. GP01-03-01) for a site located in the northeasterly direction of this proposed amendment at the corner of North First Street and Metro Drive. The City Council stated that the approved designation was appropriate for the area because it presented a unique development opportunity due to the mix of current and anticipated uses in the surrounding area. It was stated that these parameters warranted a General Plan land use designation that would provide the flexibility to best respond to the market while designing an exceptional project that provides strong interface and ties to the neighboring uses.



## Rincon South Specific Plan

The Rincon South Specific Plan was adopted by the City Council in November 1998. The Plan area is bounded by US Highway 101, Interstate 880, and the Guadalupe Parkway (State Route 87). The Specific Plan seeks to take advantage of the light rail stations within the area to allow for new industrial and office development, while also mitigating the traffic impacts associated with such development. To accomplish this, the Plan promotes the intensification of residential and commercial uses in proximity to the light rail stations and existing employment centers. The Specific Plan also recognizes and builds on the very successful office and industrial development located in the northwestern portion of the area. In addition, the Plan seeks to preserve the Rosemary Gardens Neighborhood, protect the industrial support services in the easternmost portion of the area, and recognize the importance of the existing and new hotel development.

## Site and Surrounding Uses

The amendment site is located at the northeast corner of Technology Drive and Skyport Drive, within the Rincon South Specific Plan boundaries, in the Technology Park Sub-Area. The site currently consists of a two-story office building surrounded by a parking lot. Uses surrounding the site include office buildings to the east, south, and north, and the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel to the west. West of the hotel is the Guadalupe Parkway (Highway 87) and the San Jose International Airport. Skyport Drive, along the southern boundary of the subject site, will eventually serve as a main entrance to the San Jose International Airport. The Guadalupe Light Rail Transit Line is located along North First Street and the Metro/Airport light rail station is located within walking distance of the subject site.



Looking at the northeast corner of Technology Drive and Skyport Drive at the southern border of the site.



Looking at the southern border of the site towards the east along Skyport Drive.

## ANALYSIS

### Land Use Compatibility/Policy Consistency

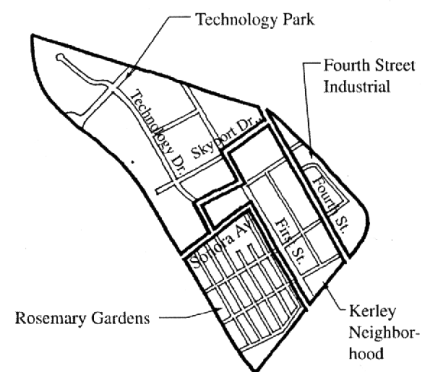
The objectives of both the Rincon South Planned Community and the Rincon South Specific Plan are the:

- Intensification of residential and commercial uses in proximity to the light rail stations and existing employment centers.
- Continuation of the very successful office and industrial development located within the northwestern portion of Rincon South.
- Preservation of the Rosemary Gardens Neighborhood.
- Protection of the industrial support services located in the easternmost portion of Rincon South.

The amendment site is located within the Technology Park sub-area of the Rincon South Specific Plan Area. Rincon South is the southernmost extension of North San Jose Rincon de Los Esteros Redevelopment Area – “the key economic engine of the City”. The Technology Park sub-area contains a majority of Rincon South’s high technology office and industrial development. As a result, the Technology Park sub-area supports the continued development and improvement of office and industrial uses in this area, as well as hotel uses.

The proposed amendment site currently has an Industrial Park land use designation. The areas surrounding the site are designated as Industrial Park, General Commercial, and Hotel. One of the objectives of the Rincon South Specific Plan is to promote economic development to improve the City’s jobs-housing balance through the protection of existing industrial and commercial uses in certain areas and by the promotion of new office, industrial, research and development, and hotel uses where appropriate. The proposed commercial land use designation on the site is consistent with the objectives of the Rincon South Specific Plan/Technology Park sub-area because it would allow for office or hotel uses.

The intent of the Rincon Specific Plan is to add more housing, but only in those certain locations where it will help to create new neighborhoods or reinforce existing residential development. A majority of the new residential land uses are planned within the Kerley Neighborhood Sub-Area, which is bounded by Skyport Drive, North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Gish Road, and North 1<sup>st</sup> Street and is located in the southeasterly direction of the amendment site. The intent of the Kerley Neighborhood Sub-Area is to establish a viable, transit-oriented residential community and to achieve the Specific Plan’s housing goals.



During the Fall 2001 General Plan Annual Review hearings, the City Council approved a land use change from Industrial Park to General Commercial in combination with Transit Corridor Residential (25-65 DU/AC) (File No. GP01-03-01) for a 6.5-acre site located in the northeasterly direction of this proposed amendment at the corner of North First Street and Metro Drive. In its decision to approve the land use change, the City Council stated:

- The site is located directly adjacent to light rail and the proposed Airport people mover.
- New residential development could provide housing for office and airport users.
- The Specific Plan indicates that market demand supports higher density residential development.
- The land use change would support transit use and locate intense uses in close proximity to transit uses.
- Other development in the area provides a mix of uses consistent with either residential, office, or mixed use. Future projects could bring residential across First Street.

Given that the Metro Drive amendment was approved, the current proposal on the northeast corner of Technology Drive and Skyport Drive offers an opportunity to begin to create more of a residential neighborhood between the two sites. In addition, staff is intending to evaluate the northwest corner of Skyport Drive and First Street during the third phase of the Housing Opportunities Study (HOS). This evaluation would also consider the cumulative park needs for the block bounded by First Street, Skyport Drive, Technology Drive, and Metro Drive, and propose a location for additional parklands. During HOS Phase III, staff does not intend to pursue any other potential housing sites west of First Street, in order to maintain the integrity of the remaining Industrial Park lands.

A land use change on the subject site would reduce the Industrial Park lands in Rincon South by an additional 4.9 acres (or 11.4 acres cumulatively). This represents an approximate 7% reduction in the amount of land planned for Industrial Park uses in the Specific Plan area.

If the property owner is interested in pursuing the reuse of the property in the short term and under current market conditions, it is likely that the site would be developed with primarily residential uses. Staff would prefer a mixed use development with ground floor retail and other support commercial uses to activate the pedestrian environment. In addition, staff would expect the development to be high quality, oriented to the street, and urban in character. The design guidelines for the Kerley Neighborhood contained in the Rincon South Specific Plan should be followed to achieve this type of development on the site.

### **Citywide Policy Issues**

The San Jose 2020 General Plan has seven Major Strategies that identify the principal objectives of the Plan. Of those seven, this amendment directly relates to four: Economic Development, Growth Management, Housing, and Sustainable City. The City's Economic Development Major Strategy encourages more commercial and industrial growth to balance existing residential development. The commercial portion of the requested land use designation does support the Economic Development Major Strategy. However, when combined with a residential designation, the change could result in a solely residential development that would eliminate the estimated 250 existing jobs on the site.

The proposed change is consistent with the Growth Management, Housing and Sustainable City Major Strategies, which support the increase of residential densities near rail stations, infill development and efficient use of resources. The proposed amendment is also consistent with several General Plan Policies such as Balanced Community Policy #2 and Residential Land Use Policy #3, which encourage higher density housing near light rail lines and other major transportation facilities.

### **Environmental Issues**

The proposed change in the General Plan land use designation on the subject site was analyzed in an Initial Study that resulted in a Mitigated Negative Declaration. The initial study determined that the change in land use would create a less than significant impact with mitigation measures in the following categories:

- Aesthetics
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The property owners within the amendment site boundaries and/or property owners within a 1000-foot radius of the amendment site were sent a newsletter regarding the three community meetings that were held on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> 2002 to discuss the proposed General Plan amendment. They also received a public hearing notice regarding the public hearings to be held on the subject amendment before the Planning Commission in May and City Council in June. In addition, the community can access information about the status of amendments on the Department's web-site, which contains information on the General Plan process, each proposed amendment, staff reports, and the hearing schedule.

At the community meetings, community members expressed concern that if the land use change was approved it would result in more traffic and parking problems than currently exist in the area. In addition, the community believed that the light rail transit system was underutilized and that many people within, or traveling to, the Rincon South area drive instead of taking light rail. New residents would also continue to drive and cause an increase in traffic in the area.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Planning staff recommends General Commercial in combination with Transit Corridor Residential (25-65 DU/AC) (Rincon South Planned Community).

### **Attachments**

PBCE002/GP\_Team/2001Annual Review/Staff Reports/Spring Review/GP02-03-02.doc